

United States Arsenal,  
Pikesville, Baltimore County, Maryland.

HABS No. Md. 14

HABS  
MD.  
3-PIKV  
1-

*Reduced Copies of Measured Drawings*

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA  
District of Maryland

Historic American Buildings Survey  
John H. Scarff, District Officer  
1012 Keyser Building, Baltimore, Md.

~~United States~~  
~~FIKESVILLE~~ ARSENAL  
Fikesville, Baltimore County, Maryland.

<u>OWNER</u>	The State of Maryland
<u>DATE OF ERECTION</u>	1816-1818
<u>ARCHITECT</u>	Unknown
<u>BUILDER</u>	Unknown
<u>PRESENT CONDITION</u>	Unused and falling rapidly into decay
<u>NUMBER OF STORIES</u>	Mostly two stories and basement, sometimes one story.
<u>MATERIAL OF CONSTRUCTION</u>	Brick, with frame floor and roof construction, slate roof on the two story buildings and tin roof on the one story buildings. Dirt floor in basement. The one story buildings have wood floors laid on sleepers upon the ground. Stone exterior windows and door trim, band courses and steps. Wood cornices. Interior walls are plastered. Wood ceilings in one story buildings.
<u>OTHER EXISTING RECORDS</u>	Illustrated Souvenir Maryland Line Confederate Soldiers Home, Fikesville, Md., compiled by Captain George W. Booth, 1894. American State Papers. Documents Legislative and Executive of the Congress of the United States, December 27, 1819- February 28, 1825 published by Gales & Seaton, Washington, 1834.

MD.  
3 PIV  
1.

PIKESVILLE ARSENAL  
Pikesville, Baltimore County, Maryland.

OTHER EXISTING RECORDS: Cont'd.

Maryland Monthly Magazine, Vol.  
5 No.2 Baltimore, August 1907.  
"The Maryland Line Confederate  
Soldiers Home" by Chas. L. Ship-  
ley.  
Real Stories from Baltimore  
County History Isobel Davidson  
1917.  
"The Confederate Soldiers Home  
1812" p 99 by Nellye M. Gorsuch.  
House Executive Documents 1875-  
76.  
Baltimore Sunday Sun Nov.6, 1932  
" Evening Sun July 19,  
1934  
Baltimore Evening Sun Mar.25, 1928  
" " " Oct.9, 1932  
" " " May 26, 1935  
" " " Apr.17, 1927  
Baltimore News Post June 6, 1935  
Baltimore American Nov. 18, 1934

.....

HISTORICAL DATA;

The following report, dated United States Arsenal,  
May 23, 1823 was written by Lieutenant Baden; Taken from,  
"Illustrated Souvenir of the Maryland Line Confederate  
Soldiers Home" pages 12, 13 and 14:

"I will here endeavor to develop in as clear and  
concise a manner as possible, what I conceive to have been  
the object of the Government in the erection of this estab-  
lishment, and its capacity to fulfill the purposes for which  
it was constructed:

"First. It was clearly perceived at the commencement  
of the late war with Great Britain, that our great commer-  
cial cities on this seaboard would be proper objects of  
attack by the enemy and in many instances would be greatly

MD.  
3. PIKV

PIKESVILLE ARSENAL  
Pikesville, Baltimore County, Maryland.

HISTORICAL DATA ,Cont'd;

exposed. Baltimore appears to have been particularly chosen as an object of attack, and from the great extent of the waters of the Chesapeake and the rich and fertile country adjoining, afforded great facility and additional inducement for the enemy to push their operations in that quarter, and the events of that crisis show, from the great deficiency in our military establishment, especially in the Department of Military Supplies, that it was for a length of time before the progress of the enemy could be checked or arrested; and independent of the causes which have existed, it is believed that in a similar encounter the enemy would renew his design, and as military positions are chosen for general and particular purposes in relation to definite objects, it was found that Baltimore became the natural point for the concentration of the military forces for ulterior operations, and it was determined by the Government to erect an arsenal and depot somewhere in the rear of that city, to afford the facility of supplies to the forces operating in the immediate vicinity, as well as those permanent military post constructed for the defense of this section of our maritime frontier. In the selection of the site for this establishment, two things presented themselves,-- the topography of the country, and the means that an enemy might have in operating upon it, and it is believed that on a proper view of the country adjacent to Baltimore the site for this depot was as judiciously chosen as the nature of the case would admit of; Secondly, it will be seen from the extent of these works (the drawings of which accompany this report,) that they combine in themselves the advantage of an arsenal of construction, as well as a depot of military supplies, and can usefully employ one or two companies of citizens, as the nature of the service may require.

"This arsenal is situated on the Reistertown turn-pike road, eight miles from the city of Baltimore. This road is smooth and firm at all seasons of the year, and affords the best land transportation; it extends back north and northwest of the arsenal and passes through the upper counties of Maryland and into the productive counties of Pennsylvania, and is a great land thoroughfare to Baltimore, thereby presenting to the establishment the advantage of procuring land transportation in time of war with

PIKESVILLE ARSENAL  
Pikesville, Baltimore County, Maryland.

HISTORICAL DATA; Cont'd.

ease and on advantageous terms. The general aspect of the country around the arsenal is remarkable for its fertility of soil, gently rolling and well wooded, and is watered by Jones and Gwynn's Falls, whose headwaters take their rise in the vicinity of the post and present on both sides a number of springs of pure water. The situation is very healthy, the whole country around is remarkable for its salubrious air, and but few local diseases prevail; these advantages render it a proper position for an encampment of troops and of military supplies. The means by which stores are transported from this arsenal to the permanent posts intended to be supplied from it, are by hauling them to Baltimore, or to the head of the navigable waters of the Severn River and from thence by water. The navigation of the Patapsco is obstructed by ice a part of the months of December and January, but no longer than twenty or thirty days; unless the season is unusually cold, it is kept open for commercial advantages. The navigation of the Severn is not usually obstructed by ice, hence this route can be resorted to in case the first fails, and in the event of both these routes being obstructed by the ice, the post for the interior defense can be supplied by land transportation at short notice, and the fortification for exterior defense can be readily supplied by taking the stores to Annapolis where the navigation is scarcely ever known to be closed by ice and from thence shipped. The distance of this arsenal from Baltimore is eight miles; to Fort M'Henry, eleven miles; to the head of the navigable waters of the Severn River, eighteen miles. The roads are firm and passable at all seasons of the year. The post on the interior line of defense can be supplied with stores at all times; the nearest to the arsenal, three and a half or four hours; the most remote, from about eighteen to twenty four hours. The fortification on the exterior line of defense can be supplied at all seasons of the year within from thirty-six to forty-eight hours. Annexed is a sketch showing the relative position of the arsenal to the principal cities, towns and water courses in the vicinity, and also the roads to and from the arsenal."

The following is quoted from, "Real Stories from Baltimore County History" by Kellye M. Gorsuch, 1917.

"The Maryland Line Confederate Soldiers' Home, of Pikesville, was owned and occupied by the United States Government as an arsenal many years ago.

MD  
3-Pixv

PIKESVILLE ARSENAL  
Pikesville, Baltimore County, Maryland.

" Shortly after the close of the second war between the United States and England, the war of 1812, our Government, fearing another war, decided to erect suitable places for the manufacture and storage of military supplies. Among the sites selected for such a post was Pikesville, then a hamlet of about a dozen houses, but its situation being on one of the main turnpikes made it a desirable location. A piece of land, adjoining the village on the southeast, was purchased by the Government from Dr. James Smith of Sudbrook.

" The site contained between fourteen and fifteen acres, for which \$895.00 was paid. Dr. Smith may be termed the founder of Pikesville as he owned at that time three-fourths of the land upon which the village is situated and also gave it its name, "Pikesville," in honor of the brave General Zebulon Montgomery Pike, who was killed at the storming of Little York, Canada, April 27, 1813

" The purchase was made in the year 1816, and the erection of the building was commenced. In about two years the work was finished and opened as a Government post, with Lieutenant Nehemiah Baden as its first commandant.

" Dances and picnics were held in the old arsenal and were attended by the aristocracy of the neighborhood.

" Captain Baden was succeeded by many officers. Colonel Hughes, who was a native of South Carolina, was the commandant from 1856 to 1861. He resigned his commission in the regular army and entered the service of the confederacy at the beginning of the Civil War.

" At the commencement of the Civil War the arsenal was seized by the "Garrison Forest Rangers," commanded by Captain Wilson C. Nicholas, a local company in sympathy with the South. They were driven out by the federal forces, who were ordered to take possession of the arsenal. During the war the post was occupied by regiments from Wisconsin, Indiana, Philadelphia, the First and Second Maryland, and others.

" In 1878 Congress passed an act authorizing the gift of the entire property to the State of Maryland for the use of the State militia, provided the property was accepted before March 1, 1880.

MD.  
3. PIV  
1-

PIKESVILLE ARSENAL  
Pikesville, Baltimore County, Maryland.

HISTORICAL DATA, Cont'd.

" The legislature of Maryland was asked to convey the property known as the Pikesville Arsenal to the Association of the Maryland Line, for the establishment of a soldiers' home for the Confederates in the State of Maryland.

" The bill was passed in February 1888, and the property was transferred to the association and also an appropriation of \$5,000 per year for the repair and support of the home.

" At the time of the transfer the entire group of buildings was in need of a thorough repair. Work was commenced in April 1888, and in June the opening and dedication was held.

" It was determined from the first to make the institution a home for those who sought its protecting care. This view has been held in the furnishing of the rooms and the rules enacted for the government of the inmates.

" The separate buildings have been named for distinguished Confederate soldiers and sailors and the rooms have been furnished as memorials by friends and relatives of some loved one who gave his life for the cause.

" Each room is furnished in a neat and attractive manner. The name of each room is placed over the door, so it can be seen at a glance.

" Perhaps the most interesting point in the home is to be found in the Relic Hall, a large room on the first floor of the Trimble Building. Here are gathered together many things that once belonged to the heroes who wore the gray.

" The home has filled its purpose in providing for the wants of those who wore the gray and followed the stars and bars through the battle cloud.

" The inmates wear their gray uniforms and slouch hats, and every one of them, even the crippled, has some daily task, according to his strength.

MD.  
3. P.K.V  
1-

PIKEVILLE ARSENAL  
Pikesville, Baltimore County, Maryland.

The work is all detailed and every department has its squad. Whatever the service required of the old soldiers it is willingly done, and the home always looks neat and the inmates are contented with their lot.

"The Home is a delightful place to visit and visitors are always welcomed by the old soldiers, whose delight it is to entertain their friends with stories of the brave deeds in which they took part in the days long passed."

Although the Federal Government deeded the property to the State of Maryland in 1878, it was only after unsuccessful attempts to dispose of it by sale. In January 1876, Secretary of War, William W. Belknap recommended its sale in a letter to the House of Representatives, and in so doing, transmitted a letter from General S. V. Benet, Chief of Ordnance, saying, the building had long since outlived its usefulness. The land had cost in 1816 when it was purchased, June 16th, \$896.13. The Government spent in construction in 1816 \$18,327.86, in 1817, \$62,775.37 and in 1818, presumably the year of its completion \$2045.95, making the total cost \$84,044.31.

In 1888, when the buildings were rehabilitated for the uses of the Confederate Home, one of the one story buildings in the north side of the quadrangle gave way to a two story frame building greatly ~~mar-~~ing the unity of the group.

At one time the buildings sheltered one hundred twenty seven Confederate Veterans. At that time the various buildings were designated by the names of Confederate officers of Army and Navy, as follows:

Major General Arnold Elzey  
Admiral Raphael Semmes  
Major General Isaac R. Trimble  
Brigadier General Henry Little  
" " Lloyd Tilghman  
" " James S. Archer  
" " Charles S. Winder  
" " William W. Mackall  
Admiral Franklin Buchanan  
General Stonewall Jackson



MD.  
3-PKV  
1-

PIKESVILLE ARSENAL  
Pikesville, Baltimore County, Maryland.

As time went on the veterans became fewer, in 1927 there were but seven survivors, in 1928 six and in 1932 the last two survivors were removed to more economical quarters elsewhere.

Today the building awaits a new and unknown use or its destruction. Winds sigh through the deserted rooms and rain drips through the roof to floors below.

*John H. Scarff*

*Rev. Dec. 9 '36 T.H.C.*